REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I.   Status of Claims

Claims 1-19 are currently pending in the application.   This Amendment amends claims 1, 6, 12 and 15, and addresses each point of objection and rejection raised by the Examiner. The claim amendments find support in the specification and drawings as originally filed.   No new matter has been added.   Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II.   Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1, 5-6, 10, 12, 14-15 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Nishikawa et al. (U.S. 6,507,411 B1, hereinafter "Nishikawa"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection with respect to amended independent claim 1, which recites:

> A method of enlarging an image and printing an enlarged image, the method comprising:
> identifying an image file having an image to be enlarged and printed;
> determining the number of pixels of the image using the identified image file;
> determining an enlargement ratio corresponding to the determined number of pixels to print without degrading image quality; and
> enlarging the image at the determined enlargement ratio and printing the enlarged image.

In making this rejection, the Examiner asserted that Nishikawa discloses a method of determining an enlargement ratio corresponding to the determined number of pixels. However, to be an "anticipation" rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102, the

reference must teach every element and limitation of the Applicant's claims. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are proper only when the claimed subject matter is identically or inherently disclosed or described in the prior art.

Applicant respectfully submits that Nishikawa does not teach each element of the claimed invention but only teaches a method for determining the enlargement ratio based on paper size, the number of sheets of paper and the size of the area of the original image (*see* col. 10, ln. 35-50, and col. 11, ln. 1-5, Nishikawa). Nishikawa's enlargement ratio does not maintain optimal image quality based on the number of pixels in an image as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 12 and 15.

Exemplary embodiments of the present invention advantageously determine the number of pixels in the image and then determine an enlargement ratio corresponding to the determined number of pixels to_print without degrading image quality_. Accordingly, images with *lower* resolution are enlarged *less* (the enlargement ratio is determined to be smaller) because the number of pixels in the image is determined to be smaller. Thus, the enlargement ratio is determined corresponding to the number of pixels, for printing without degrading image quality. This method of limiting the enlargement ratio overcomes the problem illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, that is, over-enlarging an image with a resulting degradation of image quality.

By contrast, Nishikawa teaches a method for enlarging an image to poster size, and printing the poster on multiple smaller sheets of paper. Accordingly, the enlargement ratio is _independent_ of the number of pixels in the original image, but rather depends on the number of sheets of paper in a horizontal and vertical direction, and the size of the effective area of the original image which is expressed by width

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and height (*see* col. 10, ln. 35-50, and col. 11, ln. 1-5, Nishikawa). Simply stated, Nishikawa's enlargement ratio is not determined based on the number of pixels in an image to print without degrading image quality.

The portion of Nishikawa cited by the Examiner illustrates this distinction. The cited portion describes enlarging by a factor of 10 without any mention of limiting the enlargement ratio based on a number of pixels for maintaining optimal image quality. Nishikawa teaches a scale of enlargement that is already designated (*see* col. 10, ln. 35-40, Nishikawa) without limiting the enlargement ratio if the original image is too small. This is what exemplary embodiments of the present invention avoid. Nishikawa fails to teach or suggest a method or apparatus for determining an enlargement ratio corresponding to the determined number of pixels, for printing without degrading image quality in the image file. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Independent claims 6, 12 and 15, as amended, comprise similar subject matter to that of claim 1 and is therefore distinguished from Nishikawa for reasons similar to those given above with respect to claim 1. Dependent claims 2-5, 7-11, 13, 14 and 16-19 are distinguished from Nishikawa at least for the reasons given above by virtue of their dependence on independent claims 6, 12 and 15.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

III.   Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 2-4, 7-9, 11, 13 and 16-18 as being obvious over Nishikawa in view of Ishizaka (US 2003/0179953, hereinafter "Ishizaka").
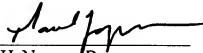
Ishizaka is cited for teaching a method of selecting an image file, determining the number of pixels extracted from header information stored in the image file and for incorporating a lookup table.

Ishizaka does not supply at least the above noted deficiencies of Nishikawa. Therefore, dependent claims 2-4, 7-9, 11, 13 and 16-18 would not have been obvious from any reasonable combination of Nishikawa and Ishizaka at least for the reasons set forth above in the analysis of their respective independent base claims.

IV.   Conclusion

In view of the above, it is believed that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and notice to that effect is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully Submitted,

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